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April 16, 1982

The Honorable William J. Casey  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, DC 20505

Dear Mr. Casey:

I hope you will agree with me that the time has come to revive one of the projects you and I discussed some years back, the establishment of a National Historical Intelligence Museum. Some of the changes in the intervening years are obvious, such as a change in attitude in both the Executive Branch and the Congress. Expanded educational efforts have helped -- the establishment and nationwide activities of AFIO, the projects of NISC, the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, the Welch Fund, along with expanded outreach efforts of the Agency and some, at least, of the learned and professional societies. Another, very important one is an outpouring of printed and audiovisual materials on which the exhibits of the museum can be based.

We have established the National Historical Intelligence Museum as a non-profit, educational, tax-exempt organization. We are reviewing possible sites in Washington, D.C., Virginia and Pennsylvania. We have a good working board and are beginning to approach people about serving on a general advisory board or specialized advisory panels (ie. history and intelligence). Our fundraising effort is beginning with approaches to selected foundations and individuals. Hopefully, approaches to corporations will follow before too long. We have a proposed budget and reams of raw materials from which museum content can be extracted.

The museum will describe, within appropriate security considerations, significant intelligence achievements, developments and personalities, using a wide variety of visual displays and audio presentations. A summary note on possible content is enclosed for your review.

Such a collection would go far to increase public understanding of the intelligence community and its efforts. The museum would parallel and complement what other museums attempt in related areas - air and space, (Smithsonian and Cape Kennedy) aviation development (Wright Patterson), nuclear

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technology, the FBI, naval, army and marine history, and specialized areas of military preparation and warfare (eg. ordnance). Such existing museums, each in its own way, "beat the drums" for a particular activity. Up to now, the activity which in many ways needs it the most, U.S. intelligence, has made no such attempt to attract an expanded national constituency from a leadership and general public which now visits museums by the millions.

John Bross has offered to get the project a hearing with you and Admiral Inman, to whom I am also sending materials on it.

For now, we hope you will be willing to help us in five critical areas:

- (1) In advising us on people in and out of Government with whom you suggest we be in early touch. (If you are willing, I'll send you or whomever you suggest the list of people suggested thus far for the advisory board).
- (2) In helping us to procure a site, preferably, of course, a building, perhaps a government building or a part of one - if possible in the District; if not, in Virginia near historic, tourist - attracting sites.
- (3) In helping us to approach foundations which do not accept proposals from general sources, notably the Anneberg Fund and related foundations.
- (4) Advising us with which Agency employees we might work in developing this project, perhaps someone on your staff, in the public affairs office, in the Center for the Study of Intelligence and in the History and Archives offices.
- (5) Supporting our requests to individuals and organizations for contributed or loaned photographic materials, artifacts and other potential museum content.

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Our thanks for considering these proposals. I should be pleased to forward any further information on proposed content, or in response to any questions you might have.

I know from your historical writing, your continuing interest in NISC and our talks of some years ago, you will give this project a very interested hearing. I hope, working together, we can develop a national intelligence museum, combining private and public efforts, more interesting than the traditional war museums and much more comprehensive than any existing museums in the U.S. with content relating to intelligence.

Sincerely,

*Martin Cramer*

Martin G. Cramer, President  
National Historical  
Intelligence Museum

cc: Admiral Inman DDCI  
John A. Bross

NATIONAL HISTORICAL INTELLIGENCE MUSEUM

A NOTE ON CONTENT

Making the museum a heavily historical one has many advantages. It allows us:

1. To provoke thought while interesting (even entertaining) the viewers on some very important points not well understood by many Americans. Dramatic treatments of history - historical novels, documentaries, historical or period films - have huge audiences, as do espionage novels; and nostalgia underlies the appeal of much in continuing education, entertainment and hobbies. All this points to a potentially very wide appeal for exhibits which make general points on intelligence collection, but focus around such dramatic subjects as espionage and colorful secret agents in the American Revolution, the Civil War and since; cryptographic successes, such as the Black Chamber and the Naval Treaty and ENIGMA and ULTRA, and failures (eg. Russia in World War I), aerial and satellite reconnaissance, such as in the U-2 story and the Cuba Missile Crisis; electronic listening as with the Great Seal in the Moscow Embassy, and intercepts, as with tapping the recently - developed telegraph in the Civil War, the Berlin Tunnel and the Zimmerman Telegram; types and variety of agents (eg. Philby, Wennerstrom, Col. Abel, Sorge, Rado, "Cicero") counterintelligence (eg. some of the FBI's more famous older cases, and more recent ones involving both military and civilian agencies and KGB activities more generally).
2. To address such important matters as war and peace, changes in non-democratic governments (succession questions), the impact of some revolutions on US interests, and thus to address general points about early warning analysis, estimates, dissemination, and briefings of top leaders, misconceptions and misjudgements, or failures to disseminate adequately and use available intelligence. Exhibits covering such subjects might center on Pearl Harbor; the beginnings of the Civil War; Arab-Israeli wars; the extravagant expectation of all initial participants in World War I; the wishfulness of the Japanese in World War II; the unwillingness to listen to evidence of Stalin with regard to Hitler's preparations for a massive attack on the Soviet Union, to cite a few arbitrarily chosen examples.

3. To make some very basic points about intelligence which the knowledgeable take for granted, but are not as well understood generally as they should be. These include:

- That espionage is an ancient and virtually universal activity.

- That we Americans owe much to intelligence activities since the time of "George Washington, Spymaster".

- That although virtually universal, intelligence is also a very "national" type of activity, dictatorships (and before that, absolutist monarchies) approaching it differently than democracies and with even differences among approaches to intelligence among the democracies (eg. the longtime acceptance of a British Official Secrets Act).

4. To address sometimes complex factors underlying the challenge posed by the need to make decisions which depend on an understanding of the probable intentions and likely actions of adversaries, potential adversaries and allies. These could include stereotypical thinking, adoption of important analogies - or failure to adopt them - or even naivete and overconfidence.

5. To make sometimes controversial matters (eg. civil liberties vs. requirements of national security; the role of the courts relative to intelligence, the limits of Congressional oversight; media coverage of intelligence; possible "political" use of intelligence data) clear in a relatively noncontroversial way.

6. To avoid the truly sensitive (eg. in dealing with technology and weaponry in terms of intelligence, or with cryptography).

Finally, in planning for relatively - recent content of the museum we will have to grapple with the fact that even highly - informed people sometimes tend to "define" intelligence differently. The museum's content, will require further discussion and definition. It clearly would include foreign intelligence and counterintelligence and should in our view, include such historical and interesting related activities as deception and forgeries, and escape and evasion. It might or might not, however in dealing with relatively recent events, cover to any extent a number of other subjects, such as counter-insurgency and guerilla warfare, psychological warfare and propaganda and covert political action, except insofar as such activities require good intelligence.